



Charles A. Peters

January 10, 1923 - May 21, 2018

The Life of Charles A. Peters

A major force in the coal industry for six decades, tireless community contributor and family patriarch, Charlie Peters passed away gracefully surrounded by family and friends on Monday, May 21st in Bluefield. His 95 years were noted for the great challenges he embraced, his accomplishments and above all, Peters' limitless desire to help without question or fail. His humility and spirituality reflect the joy one experiences when they constantly provide for others.

Born on a rural Monroe County farm near Union in 1923, Peters was the 5th of 7 children raised by Clark and Bertie Peters. His formative years revolved around daily responsibility for the large family garden and church. The Great Depression hardened the family's existence, tempered only by the unconditional love they shared. After graduating from high school in 1940, with no opportunity, Peters moved to South Charleston to labor in the naval ordnance plant.

In early 1942, his life dramatically changed when he was drafted into the Army. An infantry soldier, Peters was a sergeant and squad leader fighting in German towns of the Ardennes Forest the day Hitler invaded and ignited the Battle of the Bulge. Although wounded in combat, he survived as a prime

example of America's Greatest Generation.

Returning to West Virginia, Peters focused on the opportunities afforded by the GI Bill and moved his younger brothers and a cousin to Huntington to attend Marshall College. There, he completed his first two years of college, founded and was the first president of the Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity and married Marjorie McCloud, with whom he would share the next 48 years and raise two children. The newlyweds moved to Tuscaloosa, Alabama where in 1950 he earned an Industrial Engineering degree from the University of Alabama. This technical education would prepare him for his fruitful 60-year career in the coal industry.

The Peters returned to West Virginia and Charlie worked for several small coal companies in the early 1950s operating coal preparation plants in the Virginia and West Virginia coalfields before settling in Bluefield in 1956 with their two small children. This was the dawn of dense media coal processing, a technology that more precisely refined raw coal into a highly efficient product for power plants and steelmaking. Over the next 20 years Peters would emerge as the world's foremost expert on this process and the systems that support it.

In Bluefield, Peters first worked for The Daniels Company and played the key role in designing and patenting coal washers as well as creating a business that fabricated and constructed coal preparation plants. Peters, a hands-on engineer, spent significant time in the field, experimenting with different process designs, tuning the plants and elevating the science of coal preparation by blending complementary coal separation approaches for different sizes of coal to optimize plants.

Between 1969 and 1978, he took on the leadership role as president of The Daniels Company. In 1978, he and Marjorie formed Peters Equipment

Company in Bluefield, Virginia and worked together to provide coal washers and preparation plants to the industry for nearly two decades. Shortly after her death in 1996, Peters reduced his role in the company by forming a partnership with W. R. Ramsey and Associates. Despite this transition, he remained active in the company for over 20 years up until the time of his death, maintaining an office and working on coal industry projects well into his 90s. Today, Peters Equipment Company prospers as a global company exporting coal washers and plant expertise throughout the world.

As a coal industry icon, Bluefield called on Peters in 1976 to revive the Bluefield Coal Show which had faded from prominence in the 1950s. Under his leadership the show committed to a theme of a "Coal Show for Coal People," and experienced growth and success for over 40 years. Peters served as the Chairman of the Bluefield Coal Show for the entire 42 years of its existence. The show not only renewed Bluefield's reputation as a focal point of the coal industry, it strengthened the financial foundation of the Bluefield Chamber of Commerce which supports the broader promotion of the area.

Peters last significant contribution to the Bluefield community was in his role as chairman of the Bluefield Community Hospital. Over 16 years that spanned the decade of the 1990s, he played a critical role in significantly expanding the facility and services. The organization during his tenure stood out as one of the most financially successful hospital systems of its type in the nation. Peters contributions helped build the foundation for the high standard of healthcare the region enjoys today.

In 1999, Peters married Dafney Kania. They spent 18 years together, devoted

to each other throughout the rest of his life as active participants in the community, church as well as coal industry activities.

Peters' association with the church and Christianity guided his entire life. Raised in the Union Methodist Church, he was a loyal member of Bland Street Methodist Church for 30 years and First Presbyterian Church for the last three decades.

Beyond Charlie Peters' major efforts with the coal show and hospital, he supported many other community organizations and activities in the Bluefield area. For one, he was an avid participant and supporter of sports. Mr. Peters arose early each morning to run 3 miles at the Bluefield High School track with a group of friends. He was also an accomplished golfer. However, his greatest contribution was as a visionary and lifelong backer of baseball in Bluefield. He regularly attended Bluefield minor league baseball games for over 50 years, served on the baseball board and as treasurer of the club in addition to providing philanthropically in support of facility needs and improvements. Last year the organization recognized his service by naming the area of Bowen Field Charles A. Peters Baseball Park.

Peters' list of other community service activities includes major recognitions from the Rotary Club, where he achieved the status of a Paul Harris Fellow; the Chamber of Commerce, which acknowledged his volunteer work with the Robert F. Hamilton Award; and the Boy Scouts of America Buckskin Council which named him as a Silver Beaver Award recipient for his contributions. In addition, Peters worked with the Bluefield Rescue Squad, Mercer County Airport Authority, Community Foundation of the Virginias and Bluefield State College where he funded the Peters Chair in Engineering.

Survivors include his wife Dafney; his daughter and son-in-law Ellen and Alan Light of Bluefield; his son and daughter-in-law Charlie and Kimberly Peters of

St. Louis; his brother and sister-in-law Robert and Nancy Peters of Naples Florida; his sister-in-law June Peters of Ronceverte, West Virginia; his step-daughter and son-in-law Theresa and Stanley Wolintos of Philadelphia, His step-son and daughter in law Joseph and Lisa Kania, also of Philadelphia as well as seven grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

The family will receive friends at Mercer Funeral Home on Friday on Friday evening, May 25, 2018 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Services will be held at First Presbyterian Church of Bluefield on Saturday May 26, 2018 at 11:00 a.m. with Dr. W.D. Hasty, Jr. officiating. Entombment will follow at Roselawn Memorial Gardens in Princeton, WV.

Memorial contributions may be sent to First Presbyterian Church, 208 Tazewell Avenue, Bluefield, West Virginia 24701 or to any of the charities that Mr. Peters supported during his lifetime.

Those wishing to share memories or condolence messages with the family may do so by visiting www.MercerFuneralHome.com Mercer Funeral Home & Crematory is serving the family of Mr. Charles A. Peters.

Cemetery Details

Roselawn Memorial Gardens Mausoleum

Princeton, WV

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 25. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Mercer Funeral Home & Crematory
1231 West Cumberland Road
Bluefield, WV 24701
(304) 327-6155
mercerc@mercercfuneralhome.com
<https://www.mercercfuneralhome.com/>

Funeral Service

MAY 26. 11:00 AM (ET)

First Presbyterian Church
208 Tazewell Avenue
Bluefield, WV 24701

Tribute Wall



“ *Charles A. Peters*

October 05, 2023 at 06:08 PM



“ *I was truly blessed to know Charlie Peters and work for him at Peters Equipment. He was such a kind, good hearted man. Bluefield was very lucky to have such a fine citizen who supported the community as he did. I will always remember you, Mr. Peters.*

Marilyn Gillespie - May 25, 2018 at 05:37 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Charles A. Peters.*



May 25, 2018 at 10:30 AM



“ *May the love of God surround you and your family during this difficult time,
May you come to know that the love of God is with you always,

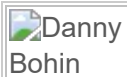
May your memories of Charles A. Peters, give you peace, comfort and strength...

Rest now in the arms of our Lord your mission on earth is complete. I thank you for your service to our Country and my Freedom. You will not be forgotten..
My thoughts
and prayers to the family of

US Army Veteran, Charles A. Peters, is “A True American Hero”
God Bless†

† Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13 †*

Cheryl Skinner, Tri-state Military Museum - May 25, 2018 at 07:02 AM



“ *My heart is saddened by the loss of Charlie. I know my Aunt Dafney will be as strong as possible. My prayers for the family, Dafney I am thinking of you.*

Danny Bohin - May 24, 2018 at 12:33 AM



“ *Mr Peters believed in everyone and I am so thankful he was my first employer. I will always remember the words of wisdom he gave me and will always cherish the talks we shared..... many thanks to Mr Peters.*

Love and prayers to the family !

Rod Shrewsbury

Theresa Shrewsbury - May 23, 2018 at 07:57 PM